

# DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

# What We Do and How We Do It

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Governor State of California

Rosario Marin

State and Consumer Services Agency

**Charlene Zettel** 

Director

Department of Consumer Affairs

A complete list of DCA's

bureaus, programs,

boards, divisions,

offices, committees

and commission

contacts—addresses.

phone numbers, and

Web sites.

800.952.5210

www.dca.ca.gov

# **What Consumers Are Saying:**

"I'm pleased with the results and how my problem was handled. Job well done—thank you!"

Kimberly Heeter

"I don't ever give high marks [but this time I had to make an exception]!"

Jose Lopez-Dee



### Publications are available from

the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) on a variety of consumer topics—everything from automobiles to professional therapy to vocational schools. Visit www.dca.ca.gov to download publications or call DCA toll-free at 866/320-8652 to request a publication.

To find out what's available, ask for the DCA Publications List.

For more information about the California Department of Consumer Affairs, visit our Web site at www.dca.ca.gov or call 800/952-5210.

# **Ensuring a Fair Marketplace**

# CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Some of us sell goods and services. All of us buy them. The marketplace, where these transactions happen, is as old as civilization itself. Equally ancient is the practice of fraud and cheating in that marketplace. To help ensure a fair marketplace in California today, the Legislature created the Department of Consumer Affairs, which protects the rights of both buyers and sellers.

# What we do:

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) educates consumers, giving them the information they need to avoid unscrupulous or unqualified people who promote deceptive products or services. DCA informs the public through publications available at DCA's Web site: www.dca.ca.gov, and through its Consumer Information Center at 800/952-5210 and the Policy & Publications Development (PPD) Office at 866/320-8652.

DCA brings information directly to consumers through outreach efforts such as presentations to community and consumer groups and by distributing consumer information at community events. DCA also develops partnerships with other community, city, county, and state consumer protection leaders who are working to help consumers become proactive. By sharing information, resources, and distribution methods, DCA strives to effectively serve all California consumers.

# DCA supports and helps consumers

DCA advocates consumer interests before lawmakers. DCA also provides consumers with current license status information on the 2.4 million professionals licensed or certified through its boards or bureaus. (Simply click on "License Verification" at DCA's Web site: www.dca.ca.gov.) DCA ensures that only qualified individuals are legally permitted to provide services in this state. Licensing also ensures that practitioners perform their duties to an acceptable standard and provides consumers with a remedy if a service is not delivered. DCA only licenses professionals who pass specialized examinations and meet experience and training requirements.

# DCA is a regulator

DCA comprises 40 bureaus, programs, boards, committees, commission, and other regulatory authorities that license 2.4 million practitioners in more than 255 professions. DCA works with professions throughout the state to guard our licensees against unfair competition and our consumers from unlicensed practitioners.

# **DCA enforces laws to protect consumers**

Enforcement of consumer laws is one of DCA's primary responsibilities. The Department's enforcement staff works with the Attorney General's Office and local district attorneys to fight fraud in the marketplace. Many investigations are initiated as the result of complaints from consumers. If DCA determines wrongdoing, it can place licensees on probation. DCA may suspend licenses or take them away

altogether. The Department also has the authority to fine businesses and individuals or issue various citations, Letters of Reprimand, and Cease and Desist orders. In less severe cases, our enforcement staff works closely with licensees to correct, eliminate, and prevent performance problems.

# DCA mediates disputes

When a dispute arises between a business and a customer, many people think they have to go to court to remedy the situation. DCA has developed a program that is a time-saving, less expensive solution. DCA's Consumer Mediation Program provides an alternative method of resolving complaints without going to court. Through the mediation process, the individuals involved in a dispute can work out their own solution with the help of a mediator. Information on DCA's Consumer Mediation Program and local mediation programs is available at the DCA Web site: www.dca.ca.gov or by calling 800/952-5210.

# **DCA** protects privacy

DCA's California Office of Privacy Protection (COPP) assists consumers with identity theft and other privacy-related problems. It also provides consumer education and information on privacy issues, coordinates with law enforcement on identity theft and high-tech and high-crime activities, and recommends policies and practices to protect individual privacy rights. Consumers may access the California Office of Privacy Protection through DCA's Web site or by calling 866/785-9663.

# **Our Mission:**

To protect and serve consumers while ensuring a competent and fair marketplace.

# **Our Vision:**

To be the recognized leader in providing innovative services that educate and empower consumers to make informed decisions.

Consumers, licensees, and businesses will have a safe, fair, and competitive marketplace.

# **Our Values:**

As a government agency dedicated to protecting consumers and regulating a variety of professions, occupations, and businesses, the success and effectiveness of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) depends on:

- Serving our stakeholders with committed, knowledgeable, well-trained employees.
- Providing prompt and fair investigation and adjudication of violations of law.
- Educating consumers so they are capable of making informed decisions in a complex and changing marketplace.
- Licensing applicants to ensure job markets are easily accessible.
- Creating productive partnerships with consumers, licensees, and businesses.
- Developing automation systems that provide efficient and effective support to consumers, DCA employees, licensees, and businesses.
- Improving consumer access to critical health and safety information and educating them on the health benefits of clean air.

# **A Brief History**

# California Department of Consumer Affairs

California's commitment to protecting consumers began with the passage of the Medical Practice Act of 1876. The Act was designed to regulate the state's medical professionals, who up to that point had operated virtually unchecked. Additional professions and vocations were brought under state authority in the course of the next 30 years. By the late 1920s, the Department of Vocational and Professional Standards was responsible for licensing or certifying accountants, architects, barbers, cosmetologists, dentists, embalmers, optometrists, pharmacists, physicians, and veterinarians. The Consumer Affairs Act was passed in 1970, giving the Department its current name.

Today, DCA licenses more than 2.4 million professionals in more than 255 professions. To safeguard consumers, this involves setting the qualifications and levels of competency for the professionals regulated by the Department's boards and bureaus. These programs license, register, or certify practitioners; investigate complaints; and discipline violators. Boards, committees, and one commission operate independently, but rely on DCA for administrative support. Fees paid by our licensees fund DCA operations almost exclusively. Bureaus, programs, divisions, and offices are under the full control of DCA.



#### **ACCOUNTANTS**

# California Board of Accountancy

2000 Evergreen Street Suite 250 Sacramento, CA 95815 www.dca.ca.gov/cba 916/263-3680

- Certified Public Accounts (CPA)
- Public Accounts (PA)
- CPA or PA Corporations and Partnerships

# **ACUPUNCTURISTS**

# **Acupuncture Board**

444 North 3rd St., Suite 260 Sacramento, CA 95814 www.acupuncture.ca.gov 916/445-3021

· Certified Acupuncturists

# APPLIANCE REPAIR See Electronic Repair

# **ARCHITECTS**

# California Architects Board

2420 Del Paso Road Suite 105 Sacramento, CA 95834 www.cab.ca.gov

916/574-7220

Architects

### Landscape Architects Technical Committee

2420 Del Paso Road Suite 105 Sacramento, CA 95834 www.latc.ca.gov 916/575-7230

Landscape Architects

# AUTOMOBILE REPAIR, WARRANTIES

# Arbitration Certification Program (ACP)

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite N-112 Sacramento, CA 95834 www.dca.ca.gov/acp 800/952-5210

916/574-7350

 ACP certifies and monitors automobile manufacturer arbitration programs to make sure they comply with California's Lemon Law and helps resolve

# Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR)

warranty disputes.

10240 Systems Parkway Sacramento, CA 95827 www.smogcheck.ca.gov 800/952-5210

- Automotive Repair Facilities
- Lamp and Brake Inspection Stations
- Smog Check Stations and Technicians

"Written estimates are required for auto repairs. Except for warranty

replacement parts or parts that are exempt per departmental regulations (i.e., too heavy or too large), consumers are entitled to the return of their replaced auto parts if they request them at the time the work order is placed."



### BARBERS, BEAUTICIANS

### Board of Barbering & Cosmetology

2420 Del Paso Road Suite 100 Sacramento, CA 95834

# www.barbercosmo.ca.gov

800/952-5210 916/574-7570

- Apprentices (barber, cosmetology, electrology)
- Barber Instructors
- Barbers
- Establishments
- Cosmetologists
- · Cosmetology Instructors
- Electrologists
- Estheticians
- Manicurists
- Provisional Instructors

DCA's Bureau for Private Postsecondary & Vocational Education licenses barber and cosmetology schools. The Board of Barbering & Cosmetology approves school curriculum.

# BEDDING MANUFACTURERS

See Furnishings, Home

### BOXERS, REFEREES, TRAINERS

# California State Athletic Commission

1424 Howe Ave., Suite 33 Sacramento, CA 95825

### www.dca.ca.gov/csac

916/263-2195

- · Assistant Matchmakers
- Boxers (professional and amateur)
- Martial Arts Fighters
- Kickboxers (professional and amateur)
- Clubs (professional and amateur)
- Gyms
- Judges (professional and amateur)
- Managers, Promoters, and Matchmakers
- Referees (professional and amateur)
- · Sparring Permits
- Timekeepers
- Trainers/Seconds
- · Ringside Physicians



# **CEMETERIES**

See Funeral

#### CONTRACTORS

### Contractors State License Board

9821 Business Park Drive Sacramento, CA 95827

#### www.cslb.ca.gov

916/255-3900 800/321-2752

- General Engineering Contractors–Class A
- General Building Contractors–Class B
- Specialty Contractors

   Class C
- Boiler, Hot Water, Heating, and Steam Fitting
- Building Moving/ Demolition
- · Cabinet and Mill Work
- Concrete
- Drywall
- Electrical (general)
- Electrical Sign
- Elevator
- · Earthwork and Paving
- Fencing
- · Fire Protection
- Flooring and Floor Covering
- General Manufactured Housing
- Glazing
- · Insulation and Acoustical
- Landscaping
- Lathing
- · Low Voltage Systems
- Masonry
- Metal Roofing
- Ornamental Metal
- Painting and Decorating
- Parking and Highway Improvement
- · Pipeline

- Plastering
- Plumbing
- · Reinforcing Steel
- · Refrigeration
- Roofing
- · Sanitation Systems
- · Sheet Metal
- Solar
- Structural Steel
- Swimming Pool
- Tile (ceramic and mosaic)
- Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning
- · Water Conditioning
- Welding
- Well Drilling (water)
- Limited Specialty (29 sublicenses)

### COSMETOLOGISTS

See Barbers/Beauticians

### **COURT REPORTERS**

# Court Reporters Board of California

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive Suite 230 Sacramento, CA 95833

# www.courtreportersboard.ca.gov

916/263-3660

Court Reporters

Contact the Contractors
State License Board
(CSLB) to find out if a
contractor has a valid license
and whether any disciplinary
action has been taken against
it. CSLB's Mandatory
Arbitration Program can

arbitrate quick, out-of-court settlements. Be sure your contractor is licensed and in good standing, or you could end up paying twice for the same work!



#### DENTAL

### **Dental Board of California**

1432 Howe Ave., Suite 85 Sacramento, CA 95825 www.dbc.ca.gov

916/263-2300

Dentists

### Committee on Dental Auxiliaries

1428 Howe Ave., Suite 58 Sacramento, CA 95825

# www.comda.ca.gov

916/263-2595

- Registered Dental Hygienists
- Registered Dental Hygienists in Extended Functions
- Registered Dental Assistants
- Registered Dental Assistants in Extended Functions
- Registered and Dental Assistants in Alternative Practice

#### **DOCTORS**

### See Medical

Selecting a doctor can be difficult. The Board can help consumers by informing them of the status of a doctor's license, such as whether the license is in good standing or has had discipline taken against it.



### **ELECTRONICS REPAIR**

# Bureau of Electronic & Appliance Repair

3485 Orange Grove Ave. North Highlands, CA 95660

www.bear.ca.gov

800/952-5210

# The Bureau registers the following businesses:

- Automotive Radio and Stereo Installation and Repair
- Automotive Security System Installation and Repair
- Cellular Phone Installation and Repair
- Combination Electronic and Appliance Repair
- Home Entertainment Electronics Repair
- Home Office Electronics Repair
- Major Home Appliance Repair
- Residential Antenna Installation and Repair (includes satellite antennas)

- Service Contract Sales
- Service Contract Administration

For a copy of Guide to Appliance and Electronic Repair, call 866/320-8652.

#### **ENGINEERS**

# Board for Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive Suite 300 Sacramento, CA 95833 www.dca.ca.gov/pels 866/780-5370

# The Board registers:

- · Agricultural Engineers
- Chemical Engineers
- · Civil Engineers
- Control System Engineers
- · Corrosion Engineers
- · Electrical Engineers
- Fire Protection Engineers
- Geotechnical Engineers
- Industrial Engineers
- Land Surveyors
- · Manufacturing Engineers
- · Mechanical Engineers
- Metallurgical Engineers
- · Nuclear Engineers
- · Petroleum Engineers
- Photogrammetric Engineers
- · Quality Engineers
- Safety Engineers
- Structural Engineers
- Traffic Engineers

#### The Board certifies:

- · Engineers-In-Training
- Land Surveyors-In-Training



# **FUNERAL**

### Cemetery and Funeral Bureau

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite S-208 Sacramento, CA 95834

### www.cfb.ca.gov

800/952-5210 916/574-7870

- Apprentice Embalmers
- · Private Cemeteries
- Private Cemetery Salespersons
- Private Cemetery Brokers
- Crematories
- Cremated Remains Disposers
- Embalmers
- Funeral Directors
- Funeral Establishments
- Funeral Preneed Trust Funds
- Cemetery Trust Funds

Bureaus and programs are directed by DCA authority; boards, committees, and the commission are semi-autonomous. Call 866/320-8652 and ask for a copy of Consumer Guide to Funeral & Cemetery Purchases.

### **FURNISHINGS, HOME**

### Bureau of Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation

3485 Orange Grove Ave. North Highlands, CA 95660 www.bhfti.ca.gov 800/952-5210

# The Bureau regulates the following businesses:

- Bedding Manufacturers
- Bedding Renovators
- Bedding Retailers
- · Bedding Wholesalers
- Custom Upholsterers
- Furniture and Bedding Retailers
- Furniture Manufacturers
- · Furniture Retailers
- Furniture Wholesalers
- Insulation Manufacturers
- Supply Dealers
- Sanitizers

Check for the labels on secondhand (renovated) mattresses before you buy. The red label tells you the amount and type of secondhand material used in the mattress. The yellow label tells you that the mattress has been sanitized. Go online to www.bhfti.ca.gov to download a copy of What You Should Know Before You Buy a Rebuilt Mattress or call 866/320-8652 to request a copy.



#### **GEOLOGISTS**

# Board for Geologists and Geophysicists

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive Suite 300-A Sacramento, CA 95833

# www.geology.ca.gov

916/263-2113

- · Engineering Geologists
- · Geologists
- Geophysicists
- Hydrogeologists

#### **GUIDE DOG TRAINING**

### State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite S-202 Sacramento, CA 95834

# www.dca.ca.gov/ guidedogboard

916/574-7825

- Instructors
- Training Schools
- Fund-raising to Establish Training Schools



# **HEARING/SPEECH**

# Hearing Aid Dispensers Bureau

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite S-209 Sacramento, CA 95834

# www.dca.ca.gov/ hearingaid

916/574-7990

# Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board

1422 Howe Ave., Suite 3 Sacramento, CA 95825

# www.slpab.ca.gov

916/263-2666

- Audiologists
- Speech-Language Pathologists



# IDENTITY THEFT See Privacy Protection



# LANDSCAPING

See Architects

# LAND SURVEYORS See Engineers

# LOCKSMITHS

See Security

For LICENSE applications, call or write the appropriate board, bureau, commission, or committee. Most licensing can also be completed online at www.dca.ca.gov.



# **MATTRESSES**

See Furnishings, Home

#### MEDICAL

# Medical Board of California

1426 Howe Ave., Suite 54 Sacramento, CA 95825

### www.medbd.ca.gov

Executive Office: 916/263-2389 Licensing: 916/263-2382 Complaints: 916/263-2424; 800/633-2322

- Fictitious Name Permits
- Medical Assistants
- Midwives
- · Outpatient Settings
- Physicians
- Surgeons
- Registered Dispensing Opticians
- Spectacle Lens Dispensers
- Contact Lens Dispensers
- · Research Psychoanalysts

# Bureau of Naturopathic Medicine

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite S-209 Sacramento, CA 95834 www.naturopathic.ca.gov 916/574-7991

### Osteopathic Medical Board of California

2720 Gateway Oaks Drive Suite 350 Sacramento, CA 95833

# www.ombc.ca.gov

916/263-3100

### Physician Assistants Committee

1424 Howe Ave., Suite 35 Sacramento, CA 95825

# www.physicianassistant. ca.gov

916/561-8780

- Educational Training Programs
- · Physician Assistants
- · Supervising Physicians

### Telephone Medical Advice Services Bureau

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite S-209 Sacramento, CA 95834 www.dca.ca.gov/tmas 916/574-7992

# MIDWIVES See Medical



#### NURSING

# Board of Registered Nursing

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite N-217 Sacramento, CA 95834

#### www.rn.ca.gov

916/322-3350

- Continuing Education Providers
- · Nurse Anesthetists
- Nurse Midwives
- Nurse Midwives with Furnishing Number

- Nurse Practitioners
- Nurse Practitioners with Furnishing Number
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses
- Public Health Nurses
- Registered Nurses

# Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 205 Sacramento, CA 95833

Sacramento, CA 95833

# www.bvnpt.ca.gov

916/263-7800

- Vocational Nurses
- · Psychiatric Technicians



# **OPTICIANS**

**See Medical** 

# **OPTOMETRISTS**

# **State Board of Optometry**

2420 Del Paso Road Suite 255 Sacramento, CA 95834

#### www.optometry.ca.gov

916/575-7170

- · Branch Offices
- · Fictitious Name Permits
- Optometric Corporations
- Optometrists

# OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

See Medical



# **PEST CONTROL**

#### Structural Pest Control Board

1418 Howe Ave., Suite 18 Sacramento, CA 95825

# www.pestboard.ca.gov

916/561-8700

- Company Registrations
- Branch Office Registrations
- · Field Representatives
- Pesticide Applicators
- · Branch 1-Fumigation
- Branch 2–General Pest Control (non-wood type pests)
- Branch 3–Termite Control (wood type pests)

### **PHARMACISTS**

### California State Board of Pharmacy

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite N-219 Sacramento, CA 95834

### www.pharmacy.ca.gov

916/574-7900

- Free/nonprofit/ surgical/clinics
- Hypodermic Needle and Syringe Distributors
- Interns
- Nonresident Pharmacies
- Out-of-State Distributors
- Pharmaceutical Wholesalers and Exemptees
- Pharmacies

- Pharmacists
- · Pharmacy Technicians

#### PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

#### Physical Therapy Board of California

1418 Howe Ave., Suite 16 Sacramento, CA 95825

# www.ptb.ca.gov

916/561-8200

- Electroneuromyographers
- Kinesiological Electromyographyers
- Physical Therapist Assistants
- · Physical Therapists

# **PHYSICIANS**

See Medical

#### **PODIATRISTS**

### California Board of Podiatric Medicine

1420 Howe Ave., Suite 8 Sacramento, CA 95825

### www.bpm.ca.gov

916/263-2647

 Doctors of Podiatric Medicine

### PRIVACY PROTECTION

### California Office of Privacy Protection

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite N-324 Sacramento, CA 95834

# www.privacy.ca.gov

866/785-9663 916/574-8180

- Assistance on identity theft and privacy concerns
- Consumer education on privacy issues
- Coordination with state, local, and federal law enforcement on identity theft
- Recommends privacy practices

# PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS

**See Security** 

# PRIVATE POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS

### Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite S-202 Sacramento, CA 95834

# www.bppve.ca.gov

916/574-7720

- Private Postsecondary Schools
- · Vocational Schools

# PSYCHIATRISTS

See Psychologists

# PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS

See Nursing

### **PSYCHOLOGISTS**

# California Board of Psychology

1422 Howe Ave., Suite 22 Sacramento, CA 95825

# www.psychboard.ca.gov

916/263-2699

- Psychological Assistants
- Psychologists
- Registered Psychologists



# REPOSSESSORS

**See Security** 

# RESPIRATORY CARE PRACTITIONERS

### Respiratory Care Board of California

444 North Third Street Suite 270 Sacramento, CA 95814

#### www.rcb.ca.gov

866/375-0386 916/323-9983

 Respiratory Care Practitioners



#### **SECURITY**

# Bureau of Security and Investigative Services

2420 Del Paso Road Suite 270 Sacramento, CA 95834

#### www.dca.ca.gov/bsis

800/952-5210 916/322-4000

- Burglar Alarm Agents
- Burglar Alarm Company Operators and Managers

- Firearms/Baton Permits
- Firearms/Baton Training Facilities and Instructors
- Locksmiths
- Private Investigators
- Private Patrol Operators
- Repossessor Employees
- Repossession
   Companies/Managers
- Security Guards/Armored Car Guards

# **SOCIAL WORKERS**

See Therapists



#### **THERAPISTS**

# Board of Behavioral Sciences

1625 N. Market Blvd. Suite S-200 Sacramento, CA 95834

# www.bbs.ca.gov

916/574-7830

- Educational Psychologists
- Licensed Clinical Social Workers
- Registered Associate Clinical Social Workers
- Licensed Marriage, Family and Child Therapists
- Registered Marriage, Family, and Child Therapist Interns

# California Board of Occupational Therapy

444 North Third Street Suite 410 Sacramento, CA 95814 www.bot.ca.gov

916/322-3394

Bureaus and programs are directed by DCA authority; boards, committees, and the commission are semi-autonomous.



# **VETERINARY MEDICINE**

### **Veterinary Medical Board**

1420 Howe Ave., Suite 6 Sacramento, CA 95825

# www.vmb.ca.gov

916/263-2610

- Veterinarians
- · Veterinary Hospitals

# Registered Veterinary Technician Committee

1420 Howe Ave., Suite 6 Sacramento, CA 95825 916/263-2610

# **VOCATIONAL NURSES**

See Nursing

#### VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

See Private Postsecondary Schools The California Department of Consumer Affairs

What We Do and How We Do It was prepared by the DCA

Policy and Publications Development (PPD) Office.

© 2006 California Department of Consumer Affairs

DCA 05-010 (04/06)

Policy and Publications Development Office California Department of Consumer Affairs

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite N-112

Sacramento, CA 95834